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171535Z Jul 00

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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6631  
INFO NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY GABORONE  
AMEMBASSY KAMPALA  
AMEMBASSY KIGALI  
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA  
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY LUANDA  
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA  
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO  
AMEMBASSY MASERU  
AMEMBASSY MBABANE  
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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AMEMBASSY WINDHOEK

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SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR GAYLE SMITH

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/17/2010  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [ECON](#) [ZI](#) [ZANU](#) [PF](#)  
SUBJECT: ZIMBABWE'S NEW CABINET: MUGABE REARRANGES THE  
DECK CHAIRS ON THE TITANIC

CLASSIFIED BY CHARGE D'AFFAIRES EARL M. IRVING FOR  
REASONS 1.5 (B) AND (D).

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SUMMARY

1. (C) PRESIDENT MUGABE ANNOUNCED HIS NEW 19 MEMBER  
(DOWN FROM 27 MEMBERS) CABINET CONSISTING OF 19 MEMBER  
ON JULY 15. A NUMBER OF THE OLD GUARD, INCLUDING WOMEN,  
WERE JETTISONED IN FAVOR OF TECHNOCRATS AND PARTY  
LOYALISTS. OF PARTICULAR NOTE IS THE FACT THAT THE  
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RUTHLESS FORMER MINISTER OF JUSTICE, LEGAL AND  
PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS EMMERSON MNANGAGWA GOT NO CABINET  
POST, ALTHOUGH HE MAY GET THE NOD TO BE SPEAKER OF  
PARLIAMENT WHERE HE WILL TAKE A HARD LINE AGAINST THE  
OPPOSITION MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE (MDC). THE  
TWO KEY ECONOMIC MINISTERS, NKOSANA MOYO AND SIMBA  
MAKONI, WILL BE ATTRACTIVE AMBASSADORS FOR ZIMBABWE TO  
THE WORLD, ALTHOUGH THEIR MARGIN FOR MANEUVER LIKELY  
WILL BE ABRIDGED BY PRESIDENT MUGABE. THE ONE FEMALE  
MINISTER, JOYCE MUJURU, HAS LITTLE INTEREST IN WOMEN'S  
ISSUES AND PROBABLY OWES HER POSITION TO THE POWER  
WIELDED BY HER HUSBAND, FORMER ARMY COMMANDER SOLOMON  
MUJURU. THE SOCIAL MINISTRIES ARE IN THE HANDS OF WEAK  
AND LESS THAN EFFECTIVE MINISTERS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF  
INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY MINISTER JONATHAN MOYO, WHOSE  
OFFICE'S PLACEMENT WITHIN THE PRESIDENCY GIVES IT A  
DISTINCTLY IDEOLOGICAL CAST. THE SECURITY MINISTRIES  
WENT TO TRUSTED MUGABE ALLIES. HOME AFFAIRS, THE LEAST  
SENSITIVE OF THESE, WENT TO A NDEBELE, JOHN NKOMO, WHO  
IS NOT VIEWED AS A CREDIBLE REPRESENTATIVE OF HIS ETHNIC

GROUP IN MATABELELAND. SOME HERE ARGUE THAT THIS MIXED BAG IS A "PLACE HOLDER" CABINET, AWAITING THE RETURN OF THE OLD GUARD IN 2002. BE THAT AS IT MAY, WE DO NOT SEE IN ITS COMPOSITION A SUFFICIENT DEPARTURE FROM THE PROBLEMS THAT HAVE PLAGUED THE MUGABE GOVERNMENT TO DATE. END SUMMARY.

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THE LOSERS  
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12. (C) PRESIDENT MUGABE ANNOUNCED HIS NEW, TRIMMED DOWN (FROM 27), 19-MEMBER, CABINET ON JULY 15. A NUMBER OF PORTFOLIOS HAVE BEEN REARRANGED OR JETTISONED ALTOGETHER. THE BIG LOSERS IN THIS GO-ROUND ARE THE OLD GUARD, THE WAR VETERANS AND WOMEN.

13. (C) WE COUNT 15 LOSERS: FORMER MINISTER OF JUSTICE, LEGAL AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS EMMERSON MNANAGAGWA; FORMER MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO EDDISON ZVOGBO; FORMER MINISTER OF INFORMATION, POSTS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS, CHEN CHIMUTENGWENDE; FORMER PLANNING COMMISSIONER RICHARD HOVE; FORMER MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE CEPHAS MSIPA; FORMER MINISTER OF STATE TSUNGIRAI HUNGWE; FORMER MINISTER OF STATE OPPAH MUCHINGURI (WHO MAY BE IN LINE FOR A PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR'S JOB); FORMER MINISTER OF STATE SITHEMBISO NYONI; FORMER MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO WITNESS MANGWENDE; WAR VETERANS LEADER CHENJERAI HITLER HUNZVI (RUMOR HAS IT HE MAY BE OFFERED A DEPUTY MINISTER POSITION); FORMER MINISTER OF MINES ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM SIMON K. MOYO; FORMER AFFIRMATIVE ACTION GROUP HEAD PHILIP CHIYANGWA (ALSO REPORTEDLY IN LINE FOR A DEPUTY MINISTER'S JOB); FORMER MINISTER OF LANDS AND AGRICULTURE KUMBIRAI KANGAI; FORMER MINISTER OF HOME

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	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00
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	PMB-00	DSCC-00	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/012W

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6632  
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AMEMBASSY GABORONE  
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AFFAIRS DUMISO DABENGWA; AND FORMER MINISTER OF PUBLIC SERVICE, LABOR AND SOCIAL WELFARE FLORENCE CHITAURO.

14. (C) OTHER ALSO-RANS WERE: FORMER DEPUTY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE OLIVIA MUCHENA, WHO DID NOT WIN THE PARTY PRIMARY AND WHOSE CANDIDACY ZANU-PF IMPOSED ON HER MUTOKO CONSTITUENCY; FORMER MANICALAND GOVERNOR KENNETH MANYONDA, WHO BEAT MORGAN TSVANGIRAI IN THE RACE FOR THE BUHERA NORTH CONSTITUENCY; AND FORMER DEPUTY MINISTER OF MINES ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM EDWARD CHINDORI-CHININGA.

15. (C) THE MOST SURPRISING MEMBER OF THE LIST IS THE  
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RUTHLESS MNANGAGWA, WHO SAID HE DID NOT WANT ANY CONSOLATION APPOINTMENT AFTER HAVING LOST HIS SEAT IN PARLIAMENT TO A RELATIVELY UNKNOWN CANDIDATE FROM THE OPPOSITION MDC, BLESSING CHEBUNDO. SOME HERE SPECULATE THE FORMER JUSTICE MINISTER MAY BE IN LINE TO BE THE NEXT SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT, FOR WHICH HE IS QUALIFIED AS THE CONSTITUTION SPECIFIES THAT THE SPEAKER MUST BE OR HAVE BEEN A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT. IF THAT IS THE CASE, THEN IT IS VERY UNLIKELY THAT WE WILL SEE MUCH COOPERATION BETWEEN THE RULING ZANU-PF AND THE MDC IN PARLIAMENT, INDEED, THERE IS LIKELY TO BE TOTAL CONFRONTATION. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT MNANGAGWA INTENDS TO WAIT IN THE WINGS FOR THE BIG PRIZE -- THE PRESIDENCY IN 2002.

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THE ECONOMIC MINISTRIES  
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16. (C) FOR PURPOSES OF ANALYSIS WE COULD DIVIDE THE CABINET PORTFOLIO INTO THREE AREAS: ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND SECURITY. ON THE ECONOMIC SIDE WE HAVE A MIXED BAG. FAILED BANKER (AND SON-IN-LAW OF THE LATE VICE PRESIDENT JOSHUA NKOMO), FRANCIS NHEMA, HEADS UP THE ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM PORTFOLIO, WHICH MANY HERE EXPECTED WOULD GO TO THE FORMER DEPUTY MINISTER OF MINES ENVIRONMENT AND TOURISM EDWARD CHINDORI-CHININGA. NHEMA TAKES THE HELM OF A MINISTRY THAT OFFERS GREAT POSSIBILITY FOR CORRUPTION. AT THE SAME TIME, HE FACES AT LEAST ONE CHARGE OF FRAUD PENDING AGAINST HIM IN THE COURTS. RESPECTED BUSINESSMAN AND FORMER SADC SECRETARY GENERAL  
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SIMBA MAKONI IS IN CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, WHICH APPARENTLY SUBSUMED THE OLD PLANNING COMMISSION. MAKONI IS A TECHNOCRAT WHO AS A DIRECTOR OF ZIMPAPERS, THE PUBLISHER OF THE GOVERNMENT INFLUENCED "THE HERALD," TURNED IT INTO A PROFITABLE CONCERN, BUT WAS SACKED WHEN HE ATTEMPTED TO INFLUENCE EDITORIAL POLICY. NEVERTHELESS, HE IS UNLIKELY TO HAVE MUCH AUTONOMY TO CRAFT ECONOMIC POLICY, AS THE PRESIDENT WILL TIE HIS HANDS IN THIS CONNECTION. SIMILARLY, NKOSANA MOYO AS MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE (A SURPRISING APPOINTMENT GIVEN THAT MOYO HAS ALWAYS TAKEN PAINS TO CAST HIMSELF AS A POLITICAL INDEPENDENT) IS ONE OF THE BEST ZIMBABWE HAS TO OFFER IN TERMS OF TECHNICAL CAPACITY, GRASP OF THE ISSUES AND NETWORK OF CONTACTS. WE PREDICT HE TOO WILL PROBABLY NOT HAVE MUCH OF A MARGIN FOR MANEUVER. LANDS, AGRICULTURE AND RESETTLEMENT MINISTER JOSEPH MADE IS SEEN AS A ZANU-PF HARD-LINER WHO WILL TAKE AN UNCOMPROMISING STANCE ON LAND REDISTRIBUTION. HE HAS BEEN THE ONE DEVISING THE JUSTIFICATIONS FOR THE COMMERCIAL FARM INVASIONS. THE "PROMOTION" OF FORMER NATIONAL SECURITY MINISTER OF STATE SYDNEY SEKERAMAYI TO HEAD UP THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND ENERGY, FOR WHICH HE HAS NO DISCERNIBLE QUALIFICATIONS, IS A CURIOUS ONE. WE

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CAN ONLY SPECULATE THAT HE HAS BEEN PUT IN CHARGE OF THE  
PORTFOLIO TO LOOT THE COUNTRY'S MINERAL WEALTH AND SKIM  
OFF COMMISSIONS FROM OIL IMPORT DEALS.

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THE SOCIAL MINISTRIES  
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17. (C) THE SOCIAL SECTOR HAS A COLLECTION OF WEAK  
MINISTERS WITH THE EXCEPTION OF JONATHAN MOYO, ZANU-PF'S  
SPLENETIC SPIN DOCTOR DURING THE FAILED CONSTITUTIONAL  
REVIEW PROCESS AND RECENT PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION, WHO  
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HAS BEEN NAMED MINSTER OF STATE FOR INFORMATION AND  
PUBLICITY. THE MINISTRY NORMALLY SHOULD HAVE TECHNICAL  
REGULATORY OVERSIGHT OF COMMUNICATIONS IN THE COUNTRY,  
BUT HAVING BEEN MOVED INTO THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE GIVES  
THE PORTFOLIO AN IDEOLOGICAL CAST. OUR FEAR IS THAT NO  
ONE WILL BE ABLE TO SILENCE HIM. HE MAY SHOOT DOWN ANY  
GOOD ECONOMIC IDEAS THAT MINISTERS MAKONI AND MOYO MAY  
HAVE AND COULD POISON RELATIONS WITH THE DONOR  
COMMUNITY. TIMOTHY "KILLJOY" STAMPS WILL CONTINUE TO  
PRESIDE OVER THE DECLINING MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND CHILD  
WELFARE. IGNATIUS CHOMBO AS HEAD OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT,  
PUBLIC WORKS AND NATIONAL HOUSING IS ALSO PERCEIVED AS A  
NONENTITY. HERBERT MURERWA AS MINISTER OF HIGHER  
EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY PROBABLY WILL CONTINUE IN HIS  
PATTERN OF A DECENT BUT INEFFECTIVE CABINET MEMBER;  
HOWEVER A marginally more effective minister in this  
less political portfolio. BORDER GEZI, AN OPPORTUNISTIC  
LIGHTWEIGHT WHO LED FARM INVASIONS, THE POLITICAL  
REEDUCATION EXERCISE, AND VOTER INTIMIDATION AS GOVERNOR  
OF MASHONALAND CENTRAL PROVINCE, WAS REWARDED WITH THE  
POST OF MINISTER OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT, GENDER AND  
EMPLOYMENT CREATION, A MINISTRY WITHOUT TEETH AND NOT  
INVOLVED IN POLICY MAKING. THIS HAS BEEN THE MINISTRY  
IN WHICH CIVIL SERVANTS ESSENTIALLY DID ZANU-PF PARTY  
WORK AND COULD BE CALLED TO ACCOUNT BY THE MDC FOR HOW  
IT SPENT ITS BUDGET ALLOTMENT. THE SOLE WOMAN APPOINTED  
TO THE CABINET IS JOYCE MUJURU, RETAINING HER POST AS  
MINISTER OF RURAL RESOURCES AND WATER DEVELOPMENT. THE  
APPOINTMENT APPEARS TO BE A NOD TO HER POWERFUL HUSBAND,  
FORMER ARMY COMMANDER SOLOMON MUJURU, CONSIDERED HERE AS  
A KINGMAKER. MUJURU HAS SHOWN NO INTEREST IN PROMOTING  
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WOMEN'S ISSUES AND IS A GREAT DISAPPOINTMENT TO WOMEN'S  
RIGHTS ACTIVISTS. FOREIGN MINISTER STANISLAUS MUDENGE,  
WHO IS ARROGANT BUT NO SHINING STAR, ALSO RETAINED HIS  
POSITION.

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THE SECURITY MINISTRIES  
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18. (C) THE SECURITY MINISTRIES CONTINUE IN THE HANDS OF

TRUSTED LOYALISTS. NICHOLAS GOCHE LEAVES AS DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND RETURNS TO HIS ROOTS IN INTELLIGENCE AS SPYMASTER MINISTER OF STATE SECURITY. GOCHE, WITH WHOM WE HAVE HAD GOOD RELATIONS, PLAYED COY ABOUT HIS APPOINTMENT WITH AMBASSADOR MCDONALD WHEN THEY MET ON THE MARGINS OF THE FRENCH NATIONAL DAY RECEPTION JULY 14, AND MAY PROVE A MORE ACCESSIBLE MINISTER. FORMER ATTORNEY GENERAL PATRICK CHINAMASA HEADS THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE LEGAL AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS, WHICH WILL BE USED AS A BLUNT INSTRUMENT FOR MUGABE TO HAVE HIS WAY WITH THE LAW. CHINAMASA IS ARGUABLY THE CABINET MEMBER WHO IS CLOSEST TO THE PRESIDENT AND IS GENERALLY PERCEIVED AS WILLING TO DO WHATEVER THE PRESIDENT ASKS. MOVEN MAHACHI RETAINS THE DEFENSE

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PORTFOLIO, PERHAPS BECAUSE MUGABE WAS UNDER NO DOMESTIC PRESSURE TO RELIEVE HIM OF IT. MAHACHI IS NOT SEEN AS HAVING ANY POLICY INPUT ON MILITARY MATTERS AS THAT IS THE PREROGATIVE OF THE PRESIDENT HIMSELF. MOREOVER, MUGABE MAY NEITHER WISH TO ALIENATE A MINISTER WHO PARTICIPATES IN THE ECONOMIC DEALS ARISING FROM THE MILITARY INTERVENTION IN THE CONGO, NOR SEND A SHUDDER THROUGH THE MILITARY, WHO HAVE LOYALLY DONE HIS BIDDING, BY REPLACING THE TOP MAN. A NDEBELE, JOHN NKOMO, SUCCEEDS FELLOW NDEBELE DUMISO DABENGWA IN THE HOME AFFAIRS MINISTRY. NKOMO IS VIEWED AS COMPETENT AND DECENT, AND MUGABE MAY HAVE THOUGHT IT A GOOD IDEA TO

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APPOINT AN ETHNIC NDEBELE TO THE JOB IN LIGHT OF CONTINUING SENSITIVITIES TO THE ATROCITIES COMMITTED IN MATABELELAND BY THE NORTH KOREAN TRAINED, ETHNIC SHONA FIFTH BRIGADE IN THE EARLY 1980'S. NKOMO, HOWEVER, IS NOT VIEWED AS A CREDIBLE NDEBELE REPRESENTATIVE IN MATABELELAND. HE IS ALSO IN THE LEAST SENSITIVE AND MOST UNDER-FUNDED OF THE SECURITY MINISTRIES.

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COMMENT  
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19. (C) THE COMMENT WE HAVE HEARD MOST OFTEN ABOUT THE NEW CABINET IS THAT IT IS A MIXED BAG. IT LOOKS CREDIBLE, PARTICULARLY IN THE PERSONS OF SIMBA MAKONI AND NKOSANA MOYO WHO WILL BE ATTRACTIVE AMBASSADORS FROM ZIMBABWE TO THE WORLD. THERE IS TALENT IN KEY AREAS AND PATRONAGE IN MANY OTHERS. NEVERTHELESS, THEY ARE ALL TAKING ORDERS FROM PRESIDENT MUGABE, MEANING THAT WE WILL SEE THE SAME RUINOUS POLICIES OVER THE NEXT COUPLE OF YEARS. SOME OF OUR CONTACTS FEAR THAT THE NEW CABINET IS COMPOSED OF "PLACE HOLDERS," PEOPLE WHO WILL KEEP THE SEATS WARM UNTIL THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS OF 2002 AND THE POTENTIAL RETURN OF SOME OF THE OLD GUARD. THE BOTTOM LINE IS THAT WE DO NOT SEE A SUFFICIENT DEPARTURE IN THE NEW LINE-UP FROM THE PROBLEMS THAT HAVE CHARACTERIZED THE GOVERNMENT TO DATE.

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